

Lady Carlotta and the Storm

text by
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Stafford Springs, Connecticut
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Usually the clouds continue with the balloon, but on this occasion they seemed fairly alive with movements of their own. They rolled, tumbled or swam around me, so colossal, so erratic and complex that I began to be afraid of them.

I could look down through clear spaces at the turbulent underlying masses.

Such glances made me feel half sea-sick, for the heaving surfaces flew dizzily past each other with the doubled speed of passing railroad trains.

The balloon itself was spinning around, sometimes one way and sometimes another.



I caught a brief glimpse of the fairgrounds and concluded to drop through the obscuring clouds. A few zigzags enabled me to reach the ground. The balloon dragged its anchor a dozen feet before being subdued.



Some ladies were my first assistants, though they were frightened to take hold of the basket and keep it from dragging further. One nearly fainted at the idea of going up in it by accident.



For several nights I had repeated visions of it all,
so vivid that I cried aloud and woke in a tremble.



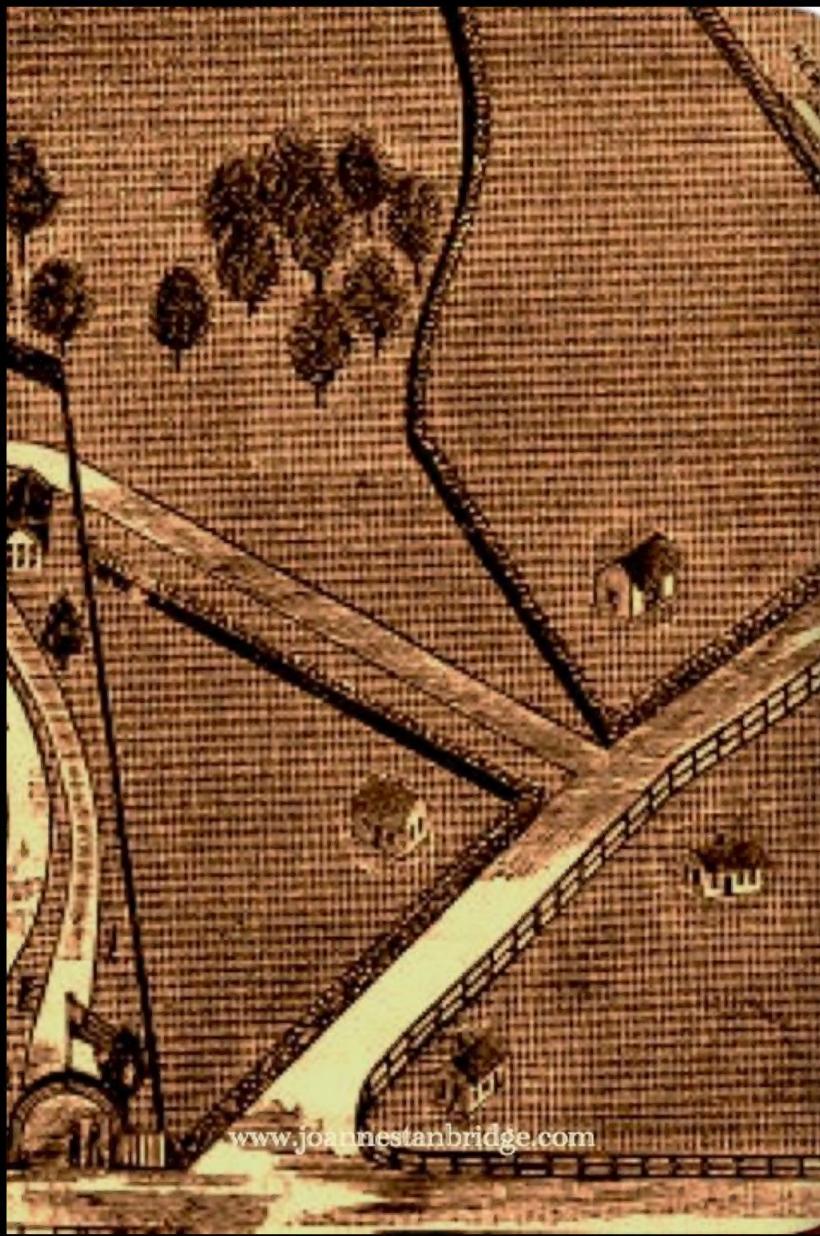
The text is a journal excerpt from
"The Aerial Adventures of Carlotta,
or Sky-Larking in Cloudland,"
by Mary Myers, 1883.

This sequence is part of a longer piece
that was submitted to
The Sketchbook Project 2011
on the theme
"In Flight."
The original is in
The Brooklyn Art Library
in New York City
and can be viewed in its entirety
on their website
www.sketchbookproject.com/brooklynartlibrary

The illustrations were done in Prismacolour markers on
parchment-style paper in November 2010

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Cover: [detail, colourized] "Grounds of the Stafford Springs Agricultural Society, Connecticut, from the "Program of a Fair to be Held October 6, 7 and 8, 1896," in "Stafford History" [online database] from Stafford (Connecticut) Public Library.



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